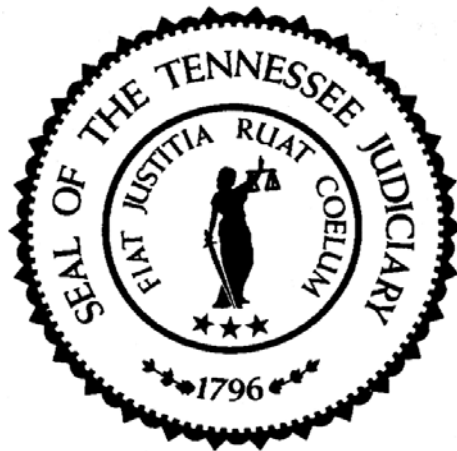


TENNESSEE COURT INTERPRETER CREDENTIALING PROGRAM

INTERPRETER MANUAL



March 2006

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I. INTRODUCTION

Court interpretation is a specialized and highly-demanding form of interpreting. It requires skills that few bilingual individuals, including language instructors, possess. To gain access to other professionals in the field, the Tennessee Administrative Office of the Courts (“AOC”) became a member of the Consortium for State Court Interpreter Certification (“Consortium”), a group under the auspices of the National Center for State Courts. Tennessee Supreme Court Rules 41 and 42, which govern the credentialing, appointment, and ethics of Tennessee’s interpreters, were based on model policies provided through the Consortium, but were modified to meet Tennessee’s needs. The Tennessee Supreme Court adopted these rules on April 25, 2002, and amended them on April 27, 2005.

CREDENTIALING REQUIREMENTS FOR INTERPRETERS WHO PASSED THE WRITTEN EXAMINATION ON OR BEFORE APRIL 27, 2005, AND ARE DESIGNATED AS REGISTERED INTERPRETERS ON OR BEFORE NOVEMBER 1, 2005, CAN BE FOUND IN SECTION II(D). CREDENTIALING REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL OTHER INTERPRETERS CAN BE FOUND IN SECTIONS II(A) AND II(C).

II. CREDENTIALING REQUIREMENTS

A. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

In Tennessee, there are three types of interpreters: (1) non-credentialed interpreters; (2) registered court interpreters; and (3) certified court interpreters. A non-credentialed interpreter is an interpreter who has not been designated as a registered or certified court interpreter by the AOC. To be designated as a registered interpreter, the interpreter must complete steps 1-6, which are listed below, in the order in which they are listed. If the interpreter does not complete the first six steps within three years of the date he attends the workshop (Step 1), he must begin the credentialing process anew after obtaining written permission from the AOC.

Upon being designated as a registered interpreter, the interpreter must complete Step 7 (pass the oral performance examination) to be designated as a certified interpreter. An interpreter cannot choose to remain a registered interpreter indefinitely. As discussed below, if an oral examination is offered in the language spoken by the interpreter, the interpreter must take the oral examination a minimum of once every twelve months until he passes it. **If an interpreter fails to comply with this requirement, the AOC will revoke his credentials and he will be required to begin the credentialing process anew after obtaining written permission from the AOC.** If you have any questions regarding Tennessee’s credentialing requirements, please contact the AOC at (615) 741-2687.

Credentialing Requirements

1. Attend an approved two-day ethics and skill-building workshop
2. Pass an approved criterion-referenced written examination
3. Pass an oral proficiency interview
4. Pass a criminal background check
5. Complete a citizenship form
6. Sign an oath

To be designated as a registered interpreter, an interpreter must complete Steps 1-6 in the order in which they are listed within three years of attending the workshop.

7. Pass an approved criterion-referenced oral performance examination

Registered interpreters must complete Step 7 to become certified.

B. DESCRIPTION OF EACH CREDENTIALING REQUIREMENT

1. Ethics and Skill-Building Workshop – This two-day workshop, which is offered several times a year, has been approved by the AOC and currently is conducted by the Tennessee Foreign Language Institute (“TFLI”). Workshop dates for 2006 are as follows: February 11-12, April 8-9, and September 16-17. The registration fee is \$200.00. To register for the workshop, contact TFLI at (615) 741-7579.
2. Written Examination – This is a multiple-choice examination which includes 135 questions in English. The examination tests an interpreter’s knowledge regarding the following: (a) the English language; (b) court-related terms and usage; and (c) ethics and professional conduct. Interpreters will receive more information about this examination during the two-day workshop. To pass the examination the interpreter must earn a minimum overall score of 80%. An interpreter who does not pass the examination must wait one calendar year before retaking it. Interpreters who attend the two-day workshop will automatically receive registration materials for the written examination from the AOC. The written examination is offered twice a year, and the next examinations are scheduled for April 1 and September 16, 2006. The non-refundable registration fee is \$25.00.
3. Oral Proficiency Interview – An interpreter who passes the written examination becomes eligible to submit to the oral proficiency interview (“OPI”), which is conducted by Language Testing International (“LTI”). This is a 20-30 minute telephonic interview between a tester who is certified by the American Council for the Teaching of Foreign Languages (“ACTFL”) and the interpreter, and this interview measures how well the interpreter speaks the language in which he is attempting to become credentialed. The fee is \$139.00 (the interpreter will also be responsible for the cost of the long distance telephone call). The AOC will provide the interpreter with registration information and additional information regarding the nature of this interview after the interpreter passes the written examination. The interpreter must receive a “Superior” rating according to the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines - Speaking to pass this interview, and may not submit to the interview more than twice during the three-year period in which he is attempting to become registered. The ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines describe the “Superior” rating as follows:

Speakers at the Superior level are able to communicate in the language with accuracy and fluency in order to participate fully and effectively in conversations on a variety of topics in formal and informal settings from both concrete and abstract perspectives. They discuss their interests and special fields of competence, explain complex matters in detail, and provide lengthy and coherent narrations, all with ease, fluency, and accuracy. They explain their opinions on a number of topics of importance to them, such as social and political issues, and provide structured argument to support their opinions. They are able to construct and develop hypotheses to explore alternative possibilities. When appropriate, they use extended discourse without unnaturally lengthy hesitation to make their point, even when engaged in abstract elaborations. Such discourse, while coherent, may still be influenced by the Superior speakers’ own language patterns, rather than those of the target language.

Superior speakers command a variety of interactive and discourse strategies, such as turn-taking and separating main ideas from supporting information through the use of syntactic and lexical devices, as well as intonational features such as pitch, stress and tone. They demonstrate virtually no pattern of error in the use of basic structures. However, they may make sporadic errors, particularly in low-frequency structures and in some complex, high-frequency structures more common to formal speech and writing. Such errors, if they do occur, do not distract the native interlocutor or interfere with communication.

4. Criminal Background Check – After the interpreter passes the OPI, the AOC will provide the interpreter with the necessary information to submit his fingerprints for a criminal background check. The fingerprints will be submitted to the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation (“TBI”) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation for analysis, and the non-refundable fee is \$56.00. Convictions for any felony or for a misdemeanor involving dishonesty or false statement will disqualify an interpreter if such conviction is ten years old or less as provided in Tennessee Rule of Evidence 609. The AOC will notify the interpreter after receiving the background check results from the TBI. The AOC usually receives the results within two weeks after the interpreter is printed, but re-printing is sometimes required and that could delay the results for months.
5. Citizenship Form – This form requires the interpreter to provide verification of United States citizenship or the legal right to work and remain in the United States. The interpreter is required to notify the AOC within three business days if his status changes at any point after he completes this form. Failure to do so may result in revocation of the interpreter’s credentials.
6. Oath – The AOC will provide the interpreter with a form which contains the following oath: "I solemnly swear or affirm that I will interpret accurately, completely and impartially, using my best skill and judgment in accordance with the standards prescribed by law and the Rules of Ethics for Spoken Foreign Language Interpreters in Tennessee Courts; that I will follow all official guidelines established by the Tennessee Supreme Court for legal interpreting or translating, and discharge all of the solemn duties and obligations of legal interpretation and translation." The interpreter must sign this form, have it notarized, and submit it to the AOC. Pursuant to Tennessee Supreme Court Rule 42, individual courts may also require an interpreter to take an oath prior to or during a court proceeding.
7. Oral Performance Examination Content And General Information For All Languages (See also Oral Performance Examination Requirements below. **THAT INFORMATION IS VERY IMPORTANT.**)

The oral performance examination is currently offered in Arabic, Cantonese, Haitian-Creole, Hmong, Korean, Laotian, Mandarin Chinese, Russian, Somali, Spanish, and Vietnamese. Examinations in other languages are being developed. An interpreter must earn a minimum score of 70% on each of the three sections to pass the examination and to be designated as a certified interpreter. The AOC offers the Spanish examination twice per year and typically offers the examination in languages other than Spanish once per year. The 2006 Spanish examinations are scheduled for May 13 and November 18, 2006. The 2006 examination for languages other than Spanish is scheduled for June 10. The non-refundable registration fee is currently \$100.00 for Tennessee residents and \$300.00 for out-of-state residents. The AOC will send registration materials to all eligible interpreters.

The oral examination has three sections (although the description refers to Spanish, the same format is used for all languages): (a) Sight Translation – The interpreter will be given a written document to translate orally from English into Spanish. The interpreter will then be given a second document to translate orally from Spanish into English. Each document is approximately 225 words in length. The interpreter will have a total of six minutes to complete each task. The interpreter is permitted to use a *maximum* of two of the six minutes to silently review the document. (b) Consecutive Interpretation – This portion of the examination consists of an audio tape recording from a transcript representing witness testimony. The interpreter must interpret the testimony, acting exactly as if he was in court. This will involve interpreting from English into Spanish (attorney’s questions) and from Spanish into English (witness’ responses). The interpreter will have 22 minutes to complete this task. To prepare for this section of the examination, the National Center for State Courts recommends that an interpreter practice interpreting in the consecutive mode until he is able to interpret 45 to 50 separate utterances of varying lengths (up to 950 words total) within 20-22 minutes. (c) Simultaneous Interpretation – This portion of the examination consists of an audio tape recording of a passage based on an attorney’s opening or closing statement to a judge or jury, a discussion between a judge and an attorney, or a similar proceeding. The interpreter will simultaneously interpret this material from English into Spanish. It is approximately 900 words in length and is recorded at an approximate speed of

120 words per minute. Including the instructions and preparation time, this portion of the examination takes approximately 10 minutes. The recording itself lasts approximately seven minutes.

The entire examination takes 40-45 minutes. The interpreter's response to each part of the examination is recorded on audiotape by the proctor. The examination is then rated by interpreters who have been trained to rate oral exams under the auspices of the Consortium for State Court Interpreter Certification.

As previously noted, an interpreter who does not pass the written examination must wait one calendar year before retaking it. The AOC does not require this waiting period for the oral examination. However, due to space limitations it may not be possible for interpreters to take the oral examination more than once per year.

Interpreters are not required to take an examination preparation course prior to the oral examination, but the AOC strongly encourages them to do so. The AOC posts available courses on the interpreter continuing education page of its website.

C. ORAL PERFORMANCE EXAMINATION REQUIREMENTS

1. Oral Performance Examination Requirements For Interpreters Who Speak Spanish

An interpreter must sit for the oral performance examination a minimum of once every twelve months from the date he is designated as a registered interpreter until he passes the examination with a minimum score of 70% per section. **If an interpreter fails to comply with this requirement, the AOC will revoke his credentials.**

Tennessee's registered and certified interpreters are required to renew their credentials every three years. In addition to meeting the renewal requirements discussed below, an interpreter must meet certain oral examination standards before his credentials will be renewed. The first time the interpreter takes the oral examination after becoming a registered interpreter, he must take all three sections of the examination. If the interpreter does not pass the examination with a minimum score of 70% per section, he must retake those sections which he did not pass. If at the conclusion of the three-year renewal period the interpreter has not passed at least one section of the examination and earned a minimum score of 60% on each of the remaining sections at some point during the renewal period, his credentials will be revoked.

If the interpreter meets these requirements as well as any other applicable renewal requirements, his credentials will be renewed. However, his oral examination scores will not carry over to the second three-year renewal period. The first time the interpreter takes the examination during the second renewal period, he will be required to take all three sections of the examination. Thereafter, he must retake those sections which he did not pass. At the conclusion of the second renewal period, the interpreter's credentials will be revoked if he has not passed the examination with a minimum score of 70% per section during that renewal period.

If the interpreter passes the examination with a minimum score of 70% per section at any point during the first or second renewal periods, he will be designated as a certified interpreter and he will not be required to take the oral examination again.

An interpreter will only be permitted to take each version of the oral examination twice. There are currently three versions of the Spanish examination available, but additional versions may be developed in the future. If an interpreter has taken each available version twice and has not passed with a minimum score of 70% per section in the manner described above, his credentials will be revoked immediately regardless of his credential renewal date.

The one-year requirement applies to every language in which an interpreter is credentialed. Therefore, if an interpreter is designated as a registered interpreter in both Spanish and Russian, for instance, he must take the oral examination in both languages during every twelve-month period.

If the AOC revokes an interpreter's credentials at any point during the credentialing process, the interpreter must obtain written permission from the AOC before beginning the credentialing process anew.

For more information regarding the oral performance examination, see Section II(B)(7) of this manual.

2. Oral Performance Examination Requirements For Interpreters Who Speak Languages Other Than Spanish

An interpreter must sit for the oral performance examination, if such an exam is available, a minimum of once every twelve months from the date he is designated as a registered interpreter until he passes the examination with a minimum score of 70% per section. **If an interpreter fails to comply with this requirement, the AOC will revoke his credentials.**

An interpreter will only be permitted to take each version of the examination twice. In languages other than Spanish, there are two or fewer examination versions available per language. Interpreters in languages other than Spanish will be required to take a new examination or a new version of an existing examination as soon as it becomes available. Given the limited number of available examinations and the fact that an interpreter is only permitted to take each version of the examination twice, the AOC does not anticipate immediately revoking an interpreter's credentials if he is unable to pass the examination after taking each version twice. However, the AOC will review the examination results on a case-by-case basis, and it reserves the right to revoke the credentials of an interpreter whose skills do not appear to be adequate for a courtroom setting.

As with the Spanish interpreters, an interpreter who speaks a language other than Spanish will not be permitted to carry his oral examination scores over from one renewal period to the next.

The one-year requirement applies to every language in which an interpreter is credentialed. Therefore, if an interpreter is designated as a registered interpreter in both Spanish and Russian, for instance, he must take the oral examination in both languages during every twelve-month period.

If the AOC revokes an interpreter's credentials at any point during the credentialing process, the interpreter must obtain written permission from the AOC before beginning the credentialing process anew.

For more information regarding the oral performance examination, see Section II(B)(7) of this manual.

D. **CREDENTIALING REQUIREMENTS FOR INTERPRETERS WHO PASSED THE WRITTEN EXAMINATION ON OR BEFORE APRIL 27, 2005, AND ARE DESIGNATED AS REGISTERED INTERPRETERS ON OR BEFORE NOVEMBER 1, 2005**

1. Requirements For Interpreters Who Speak Spanish

An interpreter must sit for the oral performance examination a minimum of once every twelve months from the date he is designated as a registered interpreter until he passes the examination with a minimum score of 70% per section. **If an interpreter fails to comply with this requirement, the AOC will revoke his credentials.**

Tennessee's credentialed interpreters are required to renew their credentials every three years. In addition to meeting the renewal requirements discussed below, an interpreter must meet certain oral examination standards before his credentials will be renewed. The first time the interpreter takes the oral examination after becoming a registered interpreter, he must take all three sections of the examination. If the interpreter

does not pass the examination with a minimum score of 70% per section, he must retake those sections which he did not pass.

At the conclusion of the first three-year renewal period, the interpreter must have passed at least one section of the examination and must have earned a minimum score of 50% on each of the remaining sections at some point during the renewal period. The interpreter must also submit to the OPI, which is discussed above, and pass it with a “Superior” rating. If the interpreter does not meet these requirements, his credentials will be revoked.

If the interpreter meets these requirements as well as any other applicable renewal requirements, his credentials will be renewed. However, his oral examination scores will not carry over to the second three-year renewal period. The first time the interpreter takes the examination during the second renewal period, he will be required to take all three sections of the examination. Thereafter, he must retake those sections which he did not pass. At the conclusion of the second three-year renewal period, the interpreter’s credentials will be revoked if he has not passed the examination with a minimum score of 70% per section during that renewal period.

If the interpreter passes the examination with a minimum score of 70% per section at any point during the first or second renewal periods, he will be designated as a certified interpreter and he will not be required to take the examination again.

An interpreter will only be permitted to take each version of the oral examination twice. There are currently three versions of the Spanish examination available, but additional versions may be developed in the future. If an interpreter takes each version twice and does not pass the examination with a minimum score of 70% per section in the manner described above, he will be required to take a new version of the examination as soon as it becomes available. If the unavailability of a new version of the examination prevents the interpreter from taking the oral examination once every twelve months as required, the interpreter will not be penalized for failing to comply with that requirement. However, regardless of whether new examination versions become available, the interpreter must satisfy the minimum standards set out above for each renewal period. Failure to do so will result in revocation of the interpreter’s credentials.

If the AOC revokes an interpreter’s credentials at any point during the credentialing process, the interpreter must obtain written permission from the AOC before beginning the credentialing process anew.

The one-year requirement applies to every language in which an interpreter is credentialed. Therefore, if an interpreter is designated as a registered interpreter in both Spanish and Russian, for instance, he must take the oral examination in both languages during every twelve-month period.

For more information regarding the oral performance examination, see Section II(B)(7) of this manual.

2. Requirements For Interpreters Who Speak Languages Other Than Spanish

Interpreters who passed the written examination on or before April 27, 2005, and are designated as registered interpreters in languages other than Spanish prior to November 1, 2005, must follow the same certification and renewal procedures set out above for new interpreters who speak languages other than Spanish. Interpreters who have not passed the oral examination with a minimum score of 70% per section by the end of the first renewal period must pass the OPI with a “Superior” rating at the end of that period or their credentials will be revoked and they will be required to begin the credentialing process anew after obtaining written permission from the AOC. *For more information regarding the oral performance examination, see Section II(B)(7) of this manual.*

III. CREDENTIAL RENEWAL

Registered and certified interpreters must periodically renew their credentials. The date of the letter designating the interpreter as a *registered* interpreter is the beginning date of the credentialing period. The date upon which the interpreter's credentials expire if not renewed is listed in the body of that letter. This renewal date is also listed on the interpreter's photo identification card, which is discussed below.

In addition to satisfying the oral examination and/or OPI requirements discussed above, an interpreter must also satisfy the continuing education requirements, which are discussed below, prior to the renewal date. Finally, the interpreter must complete any forms, pay any fees, and complete any additional steps required by the AOC. The AOC will provide additional information regarding this process at a later date.

If the AOC revokes an interpreter's credentials at any point during the credentialing process, including the credential renewal process, the interpreter must obtain written permission from the AOC before beginning the credentialing process anew.

IV. CONTINUING EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS

Tennessee Supreme Court Rule 42, Section 5(c)(2)(i) provides the following as one requirement before an interpreter will be eligible to renew his credentials at the conclusion of each three-year renewal period: "Providing documentation of 18 hours of approved continuing education (CE) credits received during the three-year period. A CE credit is equal to one contact hour in the classroom. A minimum of 12 of the 18 hours must consist of foreign language or interpreting skills training. The Administrative Director of the Courts is authorized to adopt policies and procedures necessary to implement this provision of the rule."

The AOC posts pre-approved continuing education courses on its website and updates that information on a frequent basis. To see the list, go to www.tsc.state.tn.us and select "Programs" and then "Court Interpreters." Upon arriving at the interpreter page, select "Interpreter Continuing Education Opportunities." If an interpreter wishes to attend a course which is not listed on this website, he must contact the AOC and receive approval BEFORE ATTENDING THE COURSE. If possible, interpreters should request approval 30 days prior to the course so the AOC will have adequate time to evaluate the appropriateness of granting the requested credits. When the AOC approves a course, it will specify which credits constitute general credits and which constitute interpreting/foreign language credits. The AOC does not grant credit for time spent on lunch breaks or other types of breaks.

An interpreter does not begin to earn continuing education credits until he is designated as a registered interpreter. When an interpreter attends a course after becoming credentialed, he must secure proof of attendance to receive continuing education credits for attending. The interpreter will submit this proof to the AOC when he renews his credentials. The proof must include the name and date of the course, the number of hours attended, the name of the sponsoring organization, and the signature of a representative of that organization verifying that the interpreter attended the course.

An interpreter who serves as a presenter at a seminar must receive PRIOR APPROVAL FROM THE AOC if he wishes to receive continuing education credits for making the presentation. The AOC will only grant credits to a presenter if the seminar is one the AOC would have approved for CE credits for the attendees. Moreover, a presenter can only get credit on one occasion for making a presentation on a particular topic. For instance, if a presenter made an identical presentation at three different conferences, he would only get credit for one conference. To receive credit for a similar, but not identical, presentation the presenter must demonstrate that there has been a substantial change requiring a significant amount of preparation time. If the AOC approves the presentation, it will grant two credits for each contact hour of instruction time.

Continuing education credits will only count toward the 18-credit requirement during the renewal period in which they are earned. Credits will not carry over from one three-year renewal period to the next.

V. EMPLOYMENT AND COMPENSATION

A. Employment

When an interpreter is designated as a registered or certified interpreter, the AOC will add the interpreter to a roster that is distributed to the courts and is also posted on the AOC's website. To view the website roster, go to www.tsc.state.tn.us and select "Programs" and then "Court Interpreters." Next, select the link to the roster. The roster is separated into certified and registered interpreters and can be searched by language. The interpreters are listed alphabetically by city to make it easier for courts to locate interpreters in their areas.

Interpreters are not employees of the AOC and do not receive appointments through the AOC. Instead, courts, lawyers, and other persons who require the assistance of an interpreter will contact an interpreter directly using the contact information included in the roster. If an interpreter wishes to serve as an interpreter in a particular county, it would not be inappropriate for him to send a letter to lawyers and/or courts in that county informing them that he is a credentialed interpreter who is offering interpreting services.

B. Compensation

The AOC compensates foreign language interpreters who provide services in cases in which an individual is indigent and is entitled to the appointment of counsel. Please see Tennessee Supreme Court Rule 13 ("Rule 13"), Section 1(d) for a list of the types of proceedings in which the AOC will compensate an interpreter. To facilitate efficient and accurate compensation, the AOC requests that interpreters carefully follow the instructions set out in the billing instructions, which are posted on the AOC's website, when completing the request-for-payment form ("invoice").

Neither the AOC's billing instructions nor the rates quoted in Rule 13 apply if an interpreter provides services in a case in which the individual is not indigent and/or is not entitled to the appointment of counsel. In those cases, an interpreter's services will be billed as court costs and the interpreter will ultimately be compensated by private counsel, a party, or the local court clerk's office at a rate negotiated by the relevant persons.

Before an interpreter can be paid by the AOC in an appropriate case, a judge must sign an order appointing the interpreter. The interpreter must attach a copy of the order to the invoice he submits to the AOC after he performs the services. If the judge does not include the required information in the order, the AOC will return the invoice to the interpreter and will process it only after the interpreter submits an order which contains the necessary information. Likewise, if the interpreter does not properly complete the invoice, the AOC will return it to the interpreter.

In most circumstances, an interpreter will complete a separate "Request For Payment Of Interpreter Services In Indigent Matter" form for each defendant. If an interpreter interprets for multiple defendants in one court on a single date, the interpreter must complete the "Multiple Defendant Request For Payment Of Interpreter Services In Indigent Matter" form.

Interpreters can find a sample order, blank invoices, sample invoices, and billing instructions on the interpreter page of the AOC's website. See the website information below.

VI. AOC AND INTERPRETER WEBSITES

The AOC's website contains a great deal of information that interpreters will find useful. Please follow the directions below to find items of interest.

- A. Interpreter Page – Includes links to court rules, legal terminology, expert witness terminology, billing instructions and forms, continuing education information, and credentialed interpreter rosters, among other things. To get to this page, go to www.tsc.state.tn.us and select “Programs” and then “Court Interpreters.” When you arrive at the interpreter page, select the link that interests you.
- B. Compensation Rules - Tennessee Supreme Court Rule 13, Section 1(d) lists the circumstances in which the AOC will compensate an interpreter. Section 4(d) of Rule 13 lists the compensation rules and rates which apply under those circumstances (see also the interpreter page, discussed above, which includes billing instructions and forms). To view Rule 13, go to www.tsc.state.tn.us and select “Court Rules” and then “Current Rules.” When you arrive at the appropriate page, select “Tennessee Supreme Court” and then select “Rule 13. Appointment, Qualifications, and Compensation of Counsel for Indigent Defendants.” Scroll down to the appropriate sections. You can also find a direct link to Section 4(d) of Rule 13 on the interpreter page of the website. Tennessee Rule of Criminal Procedure 28 and Tennessee Rule of Civil Procedure 54 provide that an interpreter's services must be billed as court costs in a proceeding in which the AOC does not compensate an interpreter. To find copies of those rules, follow the same directions you followed to find Rule 13, but select “Rules of Criminal Procedure” or “Rules of Civil Procedure” before selecting the appropriate rule.
- C. Appointment, Credentialing, and Ethics – Tennessee Supreme Court Rule 41 is the ethics code for interpreters and is entitled “Rules of Ethics for Spoken Foreign Language Interpreters in Tennessee Courts.” Tennessee Supreme Court Rule 42 governs the appointment and credentialing of interpreters. The interpreter page of the website, which was discussed above, has links to both rules. In the alternative, go to www.tsc.state.tn.us and select “Court Rules” and then “Current Rules.” When you arrive at the rules page, select “Tennessee Supreme Court” and then select the appropriate rule.

VII. PHOTO IDENTIFICATION CARDS

When an interpreter becomes registered or certified, he will be required to make an appointment with the AOC to have his photograph taken for the photograph identification card. The AOC has informed the courts that all credentialed interpreters possess these cards, and has encouraged the courts to ask to see the cards before allowing an interpreter to interpret during a court proceeding.

In addition to displaying a photograph, the card lists the interpreter's name, language, status (registered or certified), identification number, and expiration date. The expiration date is the date upon which the interpreter's credentials will expire if not renewed. The identification number is the number the interpreter should add to any continuing education attendance forms which request an i.d. number. The interpreter will also be required to provide the AOC with this identification number at the time he renews his credentials. There may be additional uses for the identification number in the future.

The seal of Tennessee's judicial branch is displayed on the photo i.d. card. An interpreter is not permitted to display this seal on letterhead, business cards, etc., or to imply in any other manner that he is an employee of the State of Tennessee. The AOC offers credentials but does not employ interpreters.

VIII. SIMULTANEOUS INTERPRETING EQUIPMENT

The AOC has provided the majority of Tennessee's judicial districts with simultaneous interpreting equipment to be used by interpreters during court proceedings. If an interpreter requests this equipment from the court and the presiding judge is not familiar with the equipment or its whereabouts, the interpreter or the judge may contact the AOC. The AOC maintains a list of contact persons for each judicial district.

The AOC recommends that the interpreter consult the instruction manual, which was included in the materials and equipment the AOC provided to each judicial district, prior to using the equipment. An interpreter also may ask the AOC for a copy of the AOC's summary of the equipment instructions or make an appointment with the AOC to receive training on the proper use of the equipment.

Under no circumstances may an interpreter remove the equipment from the courthouse. Moreover, the AOC will not compensate an interpreter for travel time, mileage, or any other expenses associated with obtaining the equipment. The equipment has been provided to the courts as a convenience, and interpreters will not be compensated for taking advantage of this benefit.

IX. RECIPROCITY

An interpreter with certification as a federal court interpreter shall be granted reciprocity as a state certified court interpreter after attending Tennessee's two-day workshop, passing Tennessee's criminal background check, completing the citizenship form, complying with the oath requirement, completing any required forms, paying any required fees, and completing any additional requirements established by the Administrative Director of the Courts.

Interpreters with any other type of certification and interpreters who have begun but have not completed the credentialing process in another state will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.